

THE
DANGER
OF THE
POLITICAL BALANCE
OF
EUROPE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE
KING OF SWEDEN,

BY THE
RT. HON. LORD MOUNTMORRES.

OPINIONUM COMMENTA DELET DIES, VERITATIS JUDICIA
CONFIRMAT— CIC.

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1790.



TO THE
EARL OF CHARLEMONT.
&c. &c. &c.

AS a Member of the Royal Academy, permit me, my Lord, to address an Irish edition of the translation of the Political Balance of Europe, to your Lordship—a comprehensive work, which has claim to the attention of an informed, and of an extensive traveller.

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In

In addressing it to you, I must recollect with satisfaction, those parliamentary labours, so often exerted in concert with your Lordship;—whose reputation and genuine patriotism, have been so justly ratified by public discernment, and constant approbation.

I have the honor to be,

Your obedient humble servant,

MOUNTMORRES.

PRELIMINARY.

THE spirit of the first works, frequently evaporates in translations; as the essence of either is often lost, when poured from one vial into another.—The Translator offers this work in an
English

English dress, with a diffident hand, to the impartial tribunal of the Public—If he shall have succeeded in representing the genius and capacity, which pervade the treatise on the Danger of the Political Balance of Power, he conceives that he shall have given satisfaction to the intelligent,—information to the political,—and amusement to the many.

In

In this work, the rapid progress of Russia, in somewhat more than half a century, from civilization to preponderance in the general system—the dethronement of Peter the Third—the accession of Catherine—the subjection of Courland—the appointment of a King of Poland, the nominee of Russia—the partition and dismemberment of that country—the

—the Leonine convention with Frederick the Great, and with Austria—the Turkish wars—the policy of the Czarina—the interests of Denmark—the constitution, the character, the revolution, and present state of Sweden—above all, the agitation of the great question, of the consequence of the subjection of Turkey, and the establishment of Russia in the Mediterranean,

Mediterranean, and its importance to the maritime powers, are most happily displayed.

The idea of any state obtaining a general ascendant, may, or may not, be a chimera ; but human affairs revolve in the same circle ; what has happened, may happen again ; and novelty is but forgetfulness. History would be the amusement

a 3

ment of children, and not the instruction of men, if the past did not prepare us for future events, and guide us through political mazes, with antecedent information.

The Russian troops have appeared with the greatest effects in the wars of Europe ; Sweden and Russia have, at different periods, experienced their obstinacy

obstnacy in the battles of Pultowa, and of Kunersdorff.

With Russia we have had connections, treaties, and alliances, since the first intercourse with that country, in the time of Edward the Sixth. In a political view, little advantage has flowed from that connection; perhaps the only instance where she appeared

on

on the political theatre in our favour, was at the close of the succession war, in 1747, when a body of Russian troops were on their march to counteract the effects of German discipline in the French troops, and the victories of Saxe, and Lowendhal, in Flanders.

Our trade with Russia for naval stores, according to this work,
produces

produces a million of unfavourable balance against this country. By more accurate accounts from our own Custom-House books, eight hundred and twenty thousand pounds *.—Conjecture and accuracy combine to form a total, which it will be our policy to lessen, by producing these articles among ourselves. Contrary to that policy which obtained, with
regard

* Chalmers.

regard to Ireland, in 1750, which cannot be here enlarged upon : the seed, the acorn of this great measure, has been planted in Ireland this last session, by a law to encourage the export of Irish fail cloth, a measure hitherto discountenanced here, though it was recommended to the British Parliament, at the beginning of this century, by Lord Somers *.

Preju-

* Lords' Journal, vol. XVII. p. 485.

Prejudices there are, no doubt, against noble, and against royal, authors---envy exacts a compromise from men in exalted stations; flattering misconception and self-love have established an opinion, that men who are above the rest of mankind in some, should be lower than the rest of their species in other respects;—but fortuitous advantages do not alter

alter the real character—fame and reputation are prizes which may be allotted to any description of men ; and we must admire those who quit exalted stations to enter into the common list, who start in the popular race, and labour to gain the prize, by surpassing mankind in the beaten tracks, and the common high road, of life.

Of

Of royal authors the catalogue is small, though splendid instances occur in the annals of literature—The arm which wielded the most successful sword, directed a pen with similar abilities:—the Commentaries of Cæsar were dictated by the same spirit with which he fought. If an enlightened period was possessed of a sage whose divine genius ranged through the immensity

sity of space, revealed the mysteries of nature, and gave to time and to motion mathematical laws, the annals of the thirteenth century, the age of obscurity and darkness, record the science of Alphonfus the Wise, king of Arragon, the author of the Tables which bear his name; who cultivated philosophy and the abstract sciences upon a throne.—If Frederick the Great appeared

appeared the foremost character on the theatre of Europe, it is well known that he has eternized his fame in a posthumous work, dedicated to candour and to truth :—the prince who has surprised Europe with the eclat of his victories, with the courage of the twelfth Charles, without his temerity, will not lose reputation, upon an attentive perusal of this work ; and the Public

lic must be pleased with the production of a monarch, who appears to bring the genius of his great predecessor to appear once more upon the stage, and to revive the glories of Gustavus Adolphus.

CON.

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THE
D A N G E R
OF THE
POLITICAL BALANCE
OF
E U R O P E.

C H A P. I.

*Introduction.—Russian Politicks before the
Reign of Catherine the Second.*

A KINGDOM, almost unknown in Europe during the last century, and gradually aggrandized at the expence of all her neighbours, whose civilization contributed only to make conquests, has menaced, for forty years

B

the

the political balance of power :—Sweden, Poland, Turkey, Prussia, and Germany, have experienced the effects of her enterprizing spirit ;—all the courts of Europe had experienced her insolence before that tragedy, to which Catherine the Second, owed her elevation to the throne.

Since that period, from the Caspian sea, to the streights of Gibraltar, there is no country of which Russia has not disturbed the tranquillity, or alarmed the precaution :—every year has produced new designs, which arose evidently from one general plan, and their execution has found no other obstacle, than that which has arisen from the revenues of that empire,

empire, which were often stretched so far, as to need a temporary repose from the abuse of power, and the prodigality of government : but their exhausted revenues, have not created the security of other states ; for, the hand of power, tired with the exertions of open violence, prepared for them a war not less dangerous, a war of negotiations : ceasing to become the prey of the sword, they had still to encounter her artifices, her intrigues, and negotiations ; the interior of that empire, presented a theatre of divisions, of trouble, and disorders, of which the springs and machines were fabricated at Petersburg ; at length, after having excited power against pow-

er, and interest against interest, in the neighbouring states, the Empress of Russia predominated alone in that vast anarchy, dictated laws through her Ambassadors, and prevented all the combinations of resistance.

This portrait is engraved, from a faithful representation of the last twenty years history of the North, and of the Levant.—Europe has seen at one time, the Ottoman Porte menaced with an invasion, of which Asia herself, could not limit the consequences: her tributaries corrupted, her allies bribed, or intimidated, the Crimea enslaved, Sweden under the yoke of a faction, subservient to
Russia,

Russia, faction discomfited without being altogether subdued, and reviving by the same protection which has plunged that kingdom, into an universal decline; Poland equally punished from the defects of her constitution, devoured by Russian troops, enslaved, dismembered, treated in every light as a Russian province: Courland reduced to the lowest state: the Council of Denmark governed by the same influence; Prussia insulated in the midst of two vast empires, whose masqued batteries could play, on the first alarm, upon the great Protector of the Germanic liberties; the rest of Europe, tranquil and indifferent, acting the part of a spectator, but not that of an arbiter.

In

In this crisis, the Ottoman Porte tired of buying peace with vast concessions, which enabled her enemies to compel her to make farther purchases, was roused from her lethargy, and her example awakened other powers, who participated secretly in her just resentment ; each of them, was anxious, and engaged in the hope, or apprehension, of what they had to gain, or to lose in this conflict, in which a moiety of Europe was engaged ; and from Italy, to the verge of the Baltic, this great question was discussed :—*what would be the consequence of a war, which would spread its baneful effects, in limiting the overbearing power of Russia ?*—Where facts speak, a chain of reasoning is useless :

useless: history is here alone the torch of precaution—from the operation of the same causes, the same effects are produced; the events which have passed, prepare us for those which are to come; and hence the solution of the problem of the consequences of the present war, demands the examination, of this original question:—*what have been the permanent principles of the Russian Court, and their effects upon the reign of the Second Catherine?*

To resolve this question, we must reject the sophisms of inconsiderate politicians, and the allegations of manifestos; truth here reposes upon public notoriety.—Let us examine the
chain

chain of consequences : the examination will lead us to conclusions, upon the due stability of the balance of power, which must affect these powers, who are most inattentive to their own interests.

In the period of the middle of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, those who had heard of the name of Russia, annexed no other idea to it, than that which is connected with a description of Tartars and of Cossacks ;—but when a man of more energy than genius, formed to govern more by the impulse of his passions, than by the slow empire of reason, a successful warrior and a tyrannic legislator, had raised up this vast Colossus, which
 had

had been buried in a barbarous obscurity, they sprung at once, to a station of preponderance, and of power before Europe could well recognise their character.

This new empire entered rapidly into the general system, and immediately announced their predominating designs, with forces, proportioned to their extensive ambition :— at their head appeared a despot, absolute master of the eighth part of the habitable globe, of opulent mines, of a hundred provinces, whose natives were inured to all extremities of rigors of climate, of hunger, of want ; warlike from the savage habits of their laws ; disciplined by the

severe pressure of despotism; insensible of fear as they were insensible of misery; obstinate in combat; strangers to fear and to desertion: calculated for conquest and destruction, more than for defensive war; and substituting fanaticism, for emulation and patriotism:—such were the people whom Peter the Great collected from the north of Europe, and from the northern limits of Germany, when he founded the capital of his empire at Petersburg.

From that period the views, and exertions, of Russia were enlarged; they were no longer bounded by incursions into the Asiatic countries: mistress of a marine in the Baltic, her influence

influence was an interesting concern to all the maritime powers; her numerous and warlike armies could easily invade Poland, Sweden, Denmark; desolate that part of those states which should oppose her, and second the efforts of their enemies; from thence issues the necessary influence of the Court of Petersburg among the southern, and western powers, who may engage in the hostilities of the North, or of Germany; assuredly the most penetrating politician could hardly believe, at the peace of Newstadt, in 1721, that twenty-five years afterwards, a king of France should give the daughter of the first Peter, the title of the Mediatrix of Europe, that a Russian
army,

army, should approach the Rhine at the requisition of England, and that, in the subsequent wars, the Russians should pillage the capital of Brandenburg.

From the same causes the alliance of this court, was solicited according to exigencies: the other extremity of Europe ambitioned her alliance, and there were few political interests in which Russia might not engage, since they weighed so considerably in the political system of the neighbouring states, and in the general balance of Europe.

To these they united the advantage of being seldom liable to act
upon

upon the defensive, to find weak states placed as feeble barriers between them, and the neighbouring powers, states either poor or divided : by evading the laws of nations, she could master these obstacles, and carry on her operations at a great distance from home.

Her forces, her position, promised an ascendant in negotiations, and her security gave a hardy boldness, in her arrangements with other states : treaties became subordinate to her interests, her allies were changed every ten years, and no court formed the same coalition, of haughtiness, and of artifice.

The

The last years of the first Elizabeth, substantiated that danger with which the liberties of Germany, and of the whole North, were menaced ; an alliance which resembled a conspiracy, was secretly formed by the Czarina, and the houses of Austria and Saxony, against the King of Prussia ; France engaged in this confederacy, and penetrated into the western, while Russia invaded the northern, parts of Germany :—governed by the same faction, which annihilated the royal authority, and which shed the blood of the most illustrious of her families, Sweden, straying from her true interests, united herself with her natural enemies, and attacked Prussian Pomerania : while Russia invaded that kingdom.—

kingdom.—It would be easy to foretel what would have been the consequences, had they not been prevented by the genius of that hero whom they aspired to subdue, and by the event which placed the third Peter, on the throne of his Aunt.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

*History of Peter the Third—and of
Prince Iwan—Accession of Catherine
the Second.*

THIS Prince, who for some time, was only known in Europe, through the medium of the calumnies of his assassins—this Prince, born and educated in Germany, had all the inclinations of his native country, and a contempt

contempt for his new subjects.— Master of Holstein, a member consequently of the German Empire, he added weight to the Russian Crown, interfered in the German system, in his own personal right, and fortified his influence with new alliances with the northern powers. Happily, this prospect did not inspire him with ambition ; he was influenced only by a just resentment against Denmark, and by his friendship for Frederick the Great. Policy, leagued with his moderation. For, the ruinous war which Elizabeth waged against the King of Prussia, had cost her three hundred thousand men, and above thirty millions of roubles.

Though

Though the third Peter, had no other title to public esteem than that of saving a Prince, upon whose preservation the maintenance of the political equilibrium depended, his memory should be regarded, and esteemed. In some venal writings, the productions of fanciful historians, his attachment to the King of Prussia was ridiculed as the effect of enthusiasm, and the puerile love of emulation:—but assuredly an enthusiasm for, and admiration of the qualities of a man, who wrought such prodigies of wisdom and intrepidity, was very excusable—and the heroism of friendship, is a rare quality amongst king's

This

This profound respect, and regard, for Frederick the Great, demonstrated judgment and sensibility in the third Peter; the enemies of Prussia, at Petersburg, had signalized themselves, by the persecution of the young Czar, during the reign of Elizabeth.—This Prince had accordingly counteracted their measures, and his subsequent conduct, in supporting the King of Prussia, was perfectly consistent.—This last monarch, was now in danger; the new English minister (Lord Bute) threatened him with desertion, and his safety seemed to depend on his Turkish negotiations, on the capricious motions, of the Khan of the Tartars.—Let us see in what terms, the hero so renowned

nowned for his knowledge of the human character, has appreciated the friendship, and generosity of the third Peter.

“ The King had cultivated the
 “ friendship of the Great Duke,
 “ when he was only sovereign of Hol-
 “ stein; and by a grateful sensibi-
 “ lity, rare amongst men, still more
 “ uncommon amongst princes, this
 “ Prince had preserved a grateful
 “ heart, of which he had even given
 “ proofs, in the seven years war;
 “ for, it was he that principally con-
 “ tributed to the retreat of the Mare-
 “ schal Apraxin, when he had worst-
 “ ed General Lewald, and had retired
 “ towards Poland.—During these
 “ troubles,

“ troubles, the Prince declined going
“ to council, of which he was a mem-
“ ber, that he might not participate
“ in the measures, which he disap-
“ proved, against Prussia.—The King
“ did not keep up the ordinary in-
“ tercourse of politicians with this
“ Prince, but acted with that cordi-
“ ality which friendship requires, and
“ which forms its most amiable ap-
“ pendage ;—the virtues of Peter,
“ were an exception to the rules of
“ politicians, happy would it have
“ been if they had made an exception
“ for him.”

Such was the testimony, rendered
to the memory of Peter the Third,
twenty-five years after his catastrophe,
by

by the first, and the most penetrating genius, with the coolness of age, and the calm of reflection, in a posthumous work dedicated to justice, and to truth; the illustrious author could not be supposed, to paint the character of the late Emperor of Russia, from the illusions of friendship; and, were such a supposition possible, he would be contradicted by the well known authenticated, testimonies and histories of that unfortunate Monarch.

The first misfortune of this Prince was to be adopted by Elizabeth, to mount one day

Sur ce Throne glissant, dont vingt Rois descendirent—

The

The second, to have been led from Holstein, to become a slave at Elizabeth's court ; and his wife was the third misfortune. His Imperial Aunt, obtained the crown by a revolution stained with injustice, and was always in dread of a counter-revolution ; her nephew was a prisoner of state. The cabinet was barred, and its councils were concealed ; all intercourse was suspected with him ; his German servants were deprived of the comforts of his conversation, and their attachment was a principle disgrace ; surrounded by enemies, the right of approach was only given to spies, observers, and betrayers of his conversation—his matrimonial misunderstanding left the Prince without domestic consolation,

consolation, and reviewing some troops at Orienabaum, became his only recreation.

His complaints gave rise to an intrigue, which serves to lead us through the mazes of those deplorable events, which ultimately deprived the Emperor of his scepter, and of his life.

The Chancellor Bestuchef, the great confidant of Elizabeth, was the Grand Duke's avowed enemy ; his insolence in contriving mortifications, made him tremble at the prospect of a new reign ; he formed the project of substituting the Prince Paul, son of Catherine the Second, under her regency, in the place of Peter the Third.

Bestuchef

Bestuchef presupposed the success of his plot, from a multitude of groundless calumnies against the Grand Duke, and the favourable reception of Elizabeth; and lastly, upon the intention of Catherine to deprive her husband of the crown, and to appropriate the regency to herself. It would be presumptuous to advance, that this Princess was concerned in this plot—but assuredly Bestuchef must have believed it, for, he never would have encountered her resistance. Elizabeth, doubtful at first, resumed a more dignified conduct, and supported her nephew against the Chancellor; and an incautious expression of the Empress Elizabeth is still cited, “I know my nephew,” said she one
C day

day, to the slanderers of the Prince,
“ I having nothing to fear from a
“ good heart, I am not so well ac-
“ quainted with my niece.”

Bestuchef, afterwards disgraced by Elizabeth, was excepted out of the amnesty, upon the accession of the third Peter; but upon the indulgence of Catherine, he was recalled from exile.

The preceding facts, which repose upon the authority of authentic historians, describe the first clouds of that tempest, in which the third Peter was involved; prudence could alone preserve him from the rocks, and breakers through which he passed;
—but

—but amongst his other virtues, he found one, namely, confidence, which caused his destruction.

Notwithstanding the reproaches justly cast upon that monarch, from the excess of his good qualities, spite of the blame with which he is attacked, upon the unfortunate career of his debaucheries, and of the slanders which hatred and remorse have attached to his memory, few princes have began to reign with more wisdom; his first public actions expiated the defects of many preceding years, and they had only six months duration.

Siberia and the state prisons, were filled with distinguished captives, victims of the favourites, and ministers of Elizabeth—the Emperor redressed their wrongs—the illustrious Munich was recalled, and reinstated—Biron, Lestock, and some of whom had offended him in the late reign, were restored to liberty, by a prince who extended his clemency to the insolent favourites of his Aunt—the first qualities of his government were justice and clemency—and his magnanimity to some Prussian officers, whom the fortune of war had deprived of liberty, and who groaned in extreme servitude, is too well known to be recorded.

The commencement of his reign promised zeal for promoting order, and discovered application, vigilance, and activity—he was early at the senate, at the different offices, and set an example of industry, by his superintendence in various departments: the first Peter was his model, and his plans formed the chart of his legislation—to him Russia owes the wisest ordinances, which have decorated that government.

Not satisfied with limiting the despotism of his officers, he abridged his own power, by abolishing the secret council of chancery, a state inquisition, which, upon the least suspicion, imprisoned, tortured, or executed, natives,

tives, and strangers. He was a warm friend to toleration; and he framed that memorable decree, which enfranchised the nobles from compulsive service, and permitted them to travel, without the royal permission.

Precipitation, it is true, accompanied some of these salutary innovations; particularly those relating to the clergy. The secularization of Monks, was adopted from the design of Peter the Great. The Emperor secured to the regular clergy competent stipends, from their immense revenues; and with the surplus he founded schools, and military hospitals.—Reason and policy approve these

these measures, and the reformation of superstitious worship; but these hasty changes shocked the customs and manners of the country; the strong hand of the first Peter could scarcely have effected their execution; but the Emperor accelerated these reforms, without reflecting, that they gave pretext to the designing, to render his government unpopular.

The regiments of Ismailoff and Preobrazinski, formed a body of guards, in barracks in Petersburg, licentious and ill disciplined, their want of subordination enervated their loyalty; and in former revolutions, they were sold to the highest purchaser. Peter the Third conceived, that rigorous discipline

pline would secure their obedience, and prevent the disorders of a body so badly organized, he introduced the Prussian discipline, modelled them after his Holstein guards, and secured order by severity : had this discipline been firmly established, their fidelity would have been secured ; corruption is difficult in a corps inured to the daily detail of their duty ; but the reformation was of necessity entrusted to German, in preference to Russian, officers. These strangers were considered as usurpers ; their favour became the object of ridicule, and the national troops were instigated to revolt, by the ignorant pride of being offended, at foreign instruction.

When

When we reflect, that many of these wise regulations were in that short period of six months, which put a period to the reign of their author, we are affected by pity, and with horror.

Some of these innovations, deserved public gratitude, others, the reproach of precipitation—though a sovereign despot, this Prince excelled in acts of bounty, and of justice. His enterprises against Denmark, were more natural, and less pernicious, than the war against Prussia, fostered by the personal hatred of Elizabeth, and her minister. The private life of Peter, it is true, was disfigured by the excesses of the table, which

ultimately might have rendered him contemptible ; but where is the king, or the individual, whose infirmities are not relieved by some good qualities ? —Does not equity hold the balance, of good, and of bad qualities ?—If the virtues and defects of the Emperor were weighed, who is there could justify his dethronement, and his death ? Is the least equality visible, between the discontents he produced, and his unfortunate exit. A warm friend, a good father, an indulgent husband, but too easy, too confident and too open to those traitors, upon whom his favours were lavished ; at the end of six months, he experienced a fate, which ten years stained with

with crimes, and with tyranny, could have scarcely justified.

His unchangeable security, annihilates all those imputations which have burthened his memory ; a conspiracy was secretly projected, of which he rejected the least suspicion—the loyal, trembled for his safety—clandestine assemblies directed the partizans of the Empress, and their designs upon the Crown. The Prince George of Holstein, and other clear-sighted men, perceived his danger—confidential emissaries daily aggravated the conduct of Peter, poisoned the public discourse, and prepared the way for a revolution :—the Emperor alone remained fearless—solicited by discoveries, he rejected

rejected them as calumnies. Amongst those who wished to awaken him from his lethargy, was the King of Prussia. That wise, and penetrating monarch, has preserved an abridgement of the letter, and the Emperor's answer ; and both cast a great light upon the true cause of this revolution.

“ The friendship of Frederick the
 “ Second, his esteem, as well as gra-
 “ titude, his opinion of the excellent
 “ qualities of the third Peter, induced
 “ him to write, and to reveal these
 “ mysteries. He requested that his
 “ coronation might take place at Mos-
 “ cow, and that his person might
 “ thereby be rendered sacred, in the
 “ eyes of the nation. He mentioned
 “ the

“ the revolutions, in Russia, since
 “ the reign of Peter the Great ; but
 “ touched them lightly, and finished
 “ with conjuring that the Emperor
 “ would take proper precautions for
 “ his personal safety.”

This letter had no impression upon
 the Emperor—he answered it in these
 terms : “ Touching the interest you
 “ express for my safety, I request you
 “ will rest contented. I am called
 “ the father of my soldiers—they pre-
 “ fer a male to a female government :
 “ I walk alone constantly, in Peterf-
 “ burg—if any mischief is meditated,
 “ it would have been effected long
 “ since ; but I am a general bene-
 “ factor, I repose myself on the pro-
 “ tection

“tection of Heaven, trusting to that,
“I have nothing to fear.”

Notwithstanding this answer, the King of Prussia continued to inform Peter the Third of his danger. Messieurs Goltz and Schewrin has orders to converse with him on this subject, in their audiences; but it was to no purpose that they told him, that while the customs of Russia prevailed, the Sovereign could not take too many precautions:—at last the king told them, “My friends, say no more
“upon that disagreeable subject.”

Affuredly this was the language of candour, and it proves how averse the Emperor was to any of these bad
designs,

designs, which were attributed to him, to colour the fatal conspiracy against his freedom, and his life. They knew but little of the human heart, and still less of an open character, which never disguised his thoughts, who do not find in the tranquillity of his conscience, the secret of his security.—Had Peter designed to imprison his wife, and his successor, her son, he could have watched all the motions of their partizans; he would have listened to the suspicions of his faithful servants, the admonitions of his friend, the Prussian monarch; the council he listened to, with such attention, would have produced explanation, and not that simple answer,

“ I am

“ I am a general benefactor, and
 “ therefore I have nothing to fear.”

It is remarkable, that the first design, was to adopt the before-mentioned project of the Chancellor Bestuchef, which was to declare the young Duke to be Emperor, under the regency of his mother; this scheme was not a new plan of the Czarina's partizans; and the consideration of its forming the base of a new plot against the Emperor, shewed it had long been in contemplation, and was an artful contrivance—they could not prevent his succession; but they intended to dethrone him, by a continuation of the same machinations,

This

This system, however, had the objections of a majority, and if a regency would have been shaken upon the first popular discontent, and upon his majority, the government of the Empress would terminate—and who could not answer that she might not experience the fate of her husband. It was, therefore, resolved to dethrone the father and the son, and to consummate their ambitious views, by placing this uncertain crown upon the head of the Empress.

Never was there a bolder project; but fortune favoured their audaciousness. Peter was on the wing for Holstein, and the conspirators chose the period of his absence, to possess
the

the capital. Had this succeeded, Russia would have had two sovereigns, in Germany and in Petersburg, with all the convulsions attendant upon divided sway. While the Czar lived, Catherine could not expect a tranquil moment—but it seems trivial circumstances accelerated the execution, aggravated the catastrophe, and secured success.

To his last day, even to his last hour Peter preserved his magnanimous, fatal security, and confidence; his Russian guards were corrupted by Orlof, and Rozamoufki; Catherine was mistress of the Capital, and his officers were seduced by flanders against their sovereign. Already had the conspirators

tors impiously counteracted their fidelity, by swearing and binding themselves in the most solemn manner, to commit high treason—and the Archbishop of Novogorod, that fanatic incendiary, whom the clemency of Peter had pardoned, presided in the solemnization of this ceremony, under the auspices of the Empress. At length the Emperor's friends were arrested, and the people were deceived by artful reports, that the Prince had died by a fall from his horse, before Peter suspected the enterprize at Petersburg.

He was then at the Orienabaum. Spite of the baseness and servile infidelity of many nobles, of military
and

and civil officers, he had still some resolute friends:—the Chancellor of Woronzof, the virtuous Marechal Munich, and his faithful Holstein troops—affairs were not yet desperate—the intrepid Munich counceled Peter to march directly to Petersburg, at the head of his German troops:—“ I shall precede you,” said the generous veteran, “ and my dead body “ shall be a rampart to your sacred “ person.” Possibly such a resolution would have crushed the conspirators; the same servile spirit which had prostrated the nobles, the people, and the soldiery, would have reduced them to their lawful sovereign, marching to vindicate his crown with his sword,

sword, and with the abilities of Munich.

But alas! irresolution superseded courage; not that Peter wanted spirit, but he was distracted by discordant councils—in his train were emissaries of the Empress, bathing the hands of this Prince with deceitful tears, affecting to represent the dangers he incurred, and inviting him to the Empress, and deprecating resistance. This perfidy accomplished what treachery had commenced; and thus Peter, surrounded by traitors, was entangled in their snares, and a prey to uncertainty, when every moment was precious, and called for decision.

Europe,

Europe, and posterity, will never forget the cruel fate of this monarch, in the flower of his age—dragged into captivity, and expiring in the ferocious hands of his wife, and his own confidents. The humane compassionated his misfortunes; and none were insensible of his sufferings, save only those from whom he had a claim to succour, and to consolation.

On the contrary, outrages of every kind were offered to him: by delivering himself up voluntarily to her, who, during fourteen years, had the honour to be the partner of his bed, it seemed he was protected, by all that is most sacred amongst men. His person, committed to the discretion
of

of the Empress, became a deposit, upon which it was no longer permitted to form attacks—it neither belonged to his enemies, by the rights of war, nor by that of the laws; and from the moment Peter had surrendered, without being compulsion, every abode of Catherine should have been an inviolable asylum for him:—alas! this illusion, by which he had been dazzled, was of a short duration.

He had been defamed by a manifesto of June the twenty-eighth;—hardly arrived at Peterhof, he became a prisoner, and felt the humiliation of being secretly visited by Count Panin, that frivolous and versatile

fatile minister, loaded with praises by hireling gazetteers—that Panin, who had dared to dictate to his master, and benefactor, to a sovereign, who was a prisoner, an act of abdication, and of dishonour; an act conceived in the most humiliating expressions—that Panin, at fine, who forced the descendant of Peter the First, to take his oath in the presence of the Almighty, and renounce his crown, to sign with his own hand such a monument of audaciousness, and infamy.

Notwithstanding this abdication, which served as a new title for preserving his life, and liberty, the Emperor, that very night, was confined in

in the castle of Robscha. Whilst her husband entered this tomb, the Empress surprised Petersburg, with the noise and bustle of triumphal entry.

But this pageant was not sufficient, to stifle the sensibility of the multitude; disloyalty, in a vast number of them, was rapidly succeeded by remorse, and by compassion. The people, who are always good, when left to their natural impulse, were shocked at hearing that their sovereign had just passed from a throne, into the horrors of an eternal prison. The soldiery manifested their emotions, every one was affected by the remembrance of Peter's virtues, and his faults were forgotten, as the dis-

D pleasure

pleasure hourly increased; the Empress was threatened with a frightful reverse . . . But let us draw a veil over this melancholy scene, which put an end to his inquietudes; let us not repeat, that the seventh day of his captivity, Peter the Third was no more; that he contended for his unhappy life, with the ferocious courtiers who penetrated into the tortures; that the screams of his convulsive agonies were heard; that two days after, some strangers saw the walls stained with the Emperor's blood; and that one of the principal performers in this tragedy, had been pursued for years, by the idea of his expiring sovereign, and exhibited a

flocking

shocking spectacle in Petersburg, of remorse, and of insanity.

At the first news of this catastrophe, Europe, though habituated to the bloody revolutions, which, for forty years, gave masters to Russia, shewed less surprise, than compassion: public opinion was favourable to the victim. In order to colour the sacrifice, fictitious reports were circulated; sinister projects were imputed to Peter the Third, against which, the Empress should have guarded herself;—
 “ For, according to the remark of a celebrated writer, “ nothing is so
 “ easy as to suppose crimes in those,
 “ who are already pursued, by the
 “ hatred of a victorious party.”

This is not the time to anticipate the revelations of History ; but there is no impropriety in presenting beforehand the justice of them, by observing how ridiculous those pretences were, with which the persecutors of Peter the Third, amused the credulity of the people.

In the manifesto of June the 28th, this Prince is accused of *having shaken the foundations of the Greek church, of the established religion ; and of having given room to apprehend that another would be introduced in its stead* : the most frantic fanaticism could only have dictated such a charge. Peter had been tolerant ; he authorised a Lutheran chapel at Orienabaum, for the use of
his

his German troops ; surely it cannot be pretended, that he should have compelled his soldiers, from Holstein, to follow, like himself, the rites and liturgy of the Greek church. His toleration was the consequence of the progress of reason, of the example of all the wise Princes of his time. When Joseph the Second had granted the Protestant congregations in his dominions, the liberty of worship ; none of his relations thought of contending with him for the Empire, under pretence that he shook the prevailing faith. This faith has no affinity with secularizing monasteries, or diminishing the number of images, which the vulgar had worshipped. These reformatations belong to religious discipline, and

and are not attempts against the dogmas of the established religion. Is it for the interest of the god of peace and justice, to dethrone, to imprison, to put to death, the legitimate chief of the state? In fine, was it consistent for the tolerant Catherine, to render herself the interpreter, the avenger of some zealots' resentment, to sacrifice the duties of affinity, and of the throne to popular fanaticism?

The second grievance, alledged in the manifesto, is not less ludicrous. It is pretended that the glory of Russia has been, as it were, *trampled upon by the peace, lately concluded with its greatest enemy*. Neither the Russian government, nor the nation, had
the

the least reason to look upon the King of Prussia as their greatest enemy; the two powers had no grounds of dispute—Elizabeth's personal rancour, and the artifices of a perverse minister, who had been justly punished, had occasioned the war; there would have been glory in putting an end to it, rather than in persisting in spilling human blood, and wasting the treasures of the state, when her interests were not concerned: had not this truth been almost self-evident, Catherine herself would not have made it clear, by her subsequent conduct to this Prince, who had been rashly called the greatest enemy to *Russia*.

It

It is plain, then, that these reproaches are only evasions contrived by those, who are sorry for having no legitimate excuse. No sovereign could be, for four and twenty hours, sure of his crown, if it depended on accusations of that kind. It is true, that to these frivolous allegations, more serious ones were added by artful rumours, particularly of a plot formed by the Emperor, against Catherine's liberty, and that of her son. But had this, and other similar designs existed, why were they not exposed in this accusatory manifesto? Why were not these legitimate complaints given, as a plea to justify such violent measures? Why has recourse been had to the danger of orthodoxy,

to

to the peace with Prussia? Why have the dangers of religion, and the peace with Prussia been started, when it was possible to gain the good opinions of the people, by disclosing a conspiracy both against the partner of the throne, and his successor? If, at the moment of fixing the public opinion, these chimerical attempts had been unnoticed, is it not probable, that they were contrived afterwards, in order to silence the clamours of the public?

Besides, many notorious facts destroy these assertions, of which no admissible proof has ever been produced. It is known, that at the time of setting out for Holstein, Peter had

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named

named the Empress regent during his absence. Who can believe, that he thus trusted the government of his capital, the administration of his empire, to a Princess whom he intended to arrest? It would be an idle task to expatiate upon these irreconcilable ideas.

But in the fortress of Schlusselfbourg, Peter, as was reported, had an apartment constructed seemingly for an illustrious person, who was reported to be the Empress. The fact is certain, that an apartment was constructed, but the inference is erroneous. There is an anecdote which unravels this mysterious incident; the learned and accurate Busching,
upon

upon his return from Russia, had published this secret ; he had been apprized of it by General Korff, who had accompanied Peter III. to Schlusfelbourg ; particular informations have confirmed the truth, and discovered some circumstances of this story, which we shall here transcribe.

In March, 1762, Peter III., accompanied by General Korff, and Mr. Goudewitz, repaired, incognito, to Schlusfelbourg, where Elizabeth, in 1756, had caused the unfortunate Prince Iwan to be transferred, who had a right to the throne, by the Empress Ann, Duchess of Courland, his Aunt:

He

He was proclaimed Emperor in 1740, when in his cradle; he was deposed by Elizabeth in 1741; he was imprisoned and assassinated in 1764. Peter was affected at seeing the manner in which this prisoner was treated: an arched room, twenty feet square, formed his habitation; a truckle bed, with a table and a few chairs, were all his furniture; hardly a faint light pervaded this sorrowful dwelling; by degrees, the Prince was weaned of most of the comforts bestowed upon him, before the former years of his captivity. In his conversation with the Emperor, he inveighed against the Grand Duke and his consort, styling them the usurpers of his crown. “ I shall re-
 “ gain

“ gain it,” added he, “ and will have
 “ them both beheaded.” Peter less
 affected by this discourse, than the
 deplorable condition of the Prince,
 whose senses were affected, and bore
 in every respect a stamp of imbeci-
 lity, assured him that the Grand
 Duke did not bear him any ill will,
 and would be much concerned at his
 situation, if he were apprized of it.—

“ I approach his person very often,”
 added he, “ and if you wish for an
 “ alleviation of your imprisonment,
 “ I promise to obtain it for you.”

The prince answered, with a sigh,
 that “ one day he had been permitted
 “ to come down into the inner court
 of the fortress, he had looked at the
 sky, and breathed a pure air ; it is,”

added

added he, " the most ravishing pleasure I have ever enjoyed ; and if the
 " Grand Duke be not an enemy to
 " me, tell him, I pray you, that I
 " beg he would grant it to me very
 " often." Peter could not help melting into tears, and from that moment resolved to set Iwan at liberty: such was likewise the sentiment of Prince George of Holstein, the Emperor's uncle ; but the insanity of the prisoner having been proved, Peter determined to have a convenient house built in the fortress for him, with a terrace, that he might take a walk every day. Whilst that building was constructing, Iwan was transferred to Kexholm, at the other extremity of the lake Ladoga. Three weeks after,

the

the Emperor was dethroned ; and as if this were a consequence of the fear with which the new building, at Schluffelbourg, had inspired his enemies, he perished a victim of his humane and generous sentiments.

Iwan survived him only two years : a new mysterious tragedy put an end, on the 5th of July, 1764, to the alarms which this Prince, though fettered, had created. It is well known that he had been assassinated by his own guards ; and that after such a crime, the only blood spilt upon a scaffold at Petersburg, was that of Lieutenant-general Mirovitch, who had been arraigned for attempting to defend

defend the life of a grand nephew to Peter the Great.

Such were the auspices under which the new Empress began to reign—the circumstances of her elevation determined her eagerness for glory. She was conscious she should keep the Russians constantly employed, fix their attention upon enterprizes and conquests, and foreign sway; to strengthen her power at home.

It has been mentioned, that the deposition of Peter, and the Empress's manifesto, were solely founded upon his plans and connections with Prussia; but these, truly patriotic plans, tho' previously condemned by her, have
all

all been executed by Catherine II.; and it is to them this Princess is indebted for the most solid part of her glory. On the other side, upon the Emperor's ashes, was laid the foundation of a close connection with the King of Prussia, who before had been declared the natural enemy of Russia.

Uncertain of the measures Frederick the Great would take, being afraid lest he should employ against herself the corps that, under Mr. de Czernichef, had joined the Prussians, she hastily recalled her troops; but they remained inactive; and as soon as the Empress had secured her authority,

rity, she adopted Peter the Third's policy, soothed Prussia, and soon attached herself to her, by a defensive alliance.

Peter had done so through principle ; Catherine did it in order to prepare enterprizes conformable to her genius and situation, to the ambition of the minions who surrounded her person : having formed the plan of imposing her laws upon her neighbours, it was important for her to keep fair with the power that could assist them. Denmark was almost gained over, Sweden was governed by a faction corrupted by Russia ; Poland was deprived of the most solemn act of sovereignty, that of electing

electing a king; in fine, Courland
did no longer exist, but to be a
prey to the caprice of the councils of
Petersburg.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

*The Usurpation of the Duchy of
Courland.*

THE Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, abounding in corn, rich from its naval stores, containing fifteen hundred thousand inhabitants, governed by a warlike nobility, possessing on the Baltic two advantageous ports, forms, by its situation, an important

portant barrier between the new dominions of the Russian empire, Prussia, and Poland. Since the Swedes have lost Livonia, Courland, in time of war, becomes necessary to supply them with provisions. In that respect, the neighbourhood of Petersburg must be very dangerous to Courland, which is thereby rendered exceedingly useful to Russia, in cases of necessity. It has been, for these fifty years, treated like a Moscovite province; but the affronts have been multiplied, and the yoke made heavier under the reign of Catherine II.

When she seized upon the reigns of government, the Prince Charles of Saxony, the second son of August III.,
possessed

possessed Courland. He had in his favour the free choice of the states, the free homage of the nobility, the solemn investiture of the king, and the republic of Poland, of which Courland is a fief. Having been installed in 1759, and acknowledged by all the powers, he united every right of lawful possession.

This possession did not prevent the Empress of Russia, in 1762, affixing her seal upon the property of the domain of Courland, and exercising a positive act of sovereignty. She wanted a Duke of her own creation, and devoted to her interests—to whom did she give the preference?—to that Ernest John Biren, declared
guilty

guilty of high treason by Elizabeth, banished to Siberia, dead in law, and so sentenced by a decree of the states of Courland. Though recalled, it is true, since Elizabeth's death, his degradation did no longer permit her to promote him again to an elective sovereignty, which, even in its origin, had never been lawful; for, Biren had evaded the personal homage he owed the republic of Poland, and the neglect of which made his investiture void.

If, however, Biren's pretensions were less warrantable, there existed only one competent judge of it, the Sovereign. It belonged to Poland to decide upon her vassal's reclamation;

August

August the Third was so moderate as to refer this examination to the Empress's decision.

Instead of using negotiations, the Empress forced the inclination of the inhabitants of Courland from the arbitration of their legitimate sovereign from Poland, the Lord Paramount of this fief. At first emissaries attempted to corrupt the loyalty of the nobles, and to stir them up against the Duke Charles. The expedients having failed, strange outrages were tried—the Duke lived at Mittau; he was expelled from that place.—The most atrocious indignities, preceded such a violation of the right of nations, of the right of sovereigns, of respect, and

and decency. M. de Simolin, a native of Courland, and then minister of the Russian cabinet, and of its tyranny, at Mittau, formed the plan of famishing the Prince Charles, and he put it into execution; he began with seizing and sequestering the revenues of the demesnes; afterwards, the archives were carried away; at length, Russian guards closed the magazines of wood, of straw, and of oats, the brewhouse, cellars, storehouses, fountains, and even the poultry yard of his Royal Highness. This execution of a new kind was followed by acts equally outrageous:—Biren was then introduced into Mittau, and installed by M. de Simolin's soldiers. That agent of the Czarina, treated the magistrates

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of

of Mittau, the States, the King of Poland's deputies, like his servants:—but the Prince Charles persisted to remain in Courland; Count Brown, Governor of Livonia, sent him orders that he should *leave the country, for, such was the Empress's pleasure.* This haughty command was effected, in spite of the lawful sovereign still resisting to the last; and thus was treated, in his own dominions, in the presence of an independent nation, a Prince, the son and vassal to the King of Poland, an ally of Russia.

Of that former encroachment upon the liberties of Courland, and the rights of Poland, the compleat reduction of the Duchy was the consequence.

sequence. Ten thousand Russians, after forcing them to receive a king, elected at Petersburg, compelled them to secure Ernest John Biren's son, the investiture of Courland. Peter, the new Duke, was permitted to preserve his dignity, but on condition that he should submit to the orders, and yield to the extorsions of the Empress's minions:—the first employments of Courland were conferred upon their creatures, and claims were silenced; those were dismissed, who could not be seduced; those were seduced, who, through an apparent good character, were likely to form an opposition. Among the latter, was the Chamberlain Howen, distinguished for his capacity and courage; having defended,

at Warsaw, the rights of his native country against the Russian despotism, he was seized, carried off, and sent to Siberia ; and he was under the necessity of choosing either the sacrifice of his patriotism, or that of his liberty : but he stooped to wear the common chain, governed Courland in the name of the Empress, and was promoted to the dignity of Bourgrave. Marshal Klopman, his predecessor in authority, had adopted the same condescension. Under the influence of those tools of the Empress, the Duke's authority has been, in fact, annihilated—the suffrages of the states have been bought publicly—vexations of every kind, alienations, political robberies, have been legalized. At the
voice

voice of the Russian minister at Mittau, Courland narrowed her limits, suffered her own subjects, reclaimed as Russians, to be carried away, subjected her policy to the rescips of the Empress's councils. More than once, the Duke, reduced to the title of his principality, saw himself forced to buy its preservation. Every murmur he risked, was answered by a menace; *and the menace was* immediately followed by an extortion. At last, fatigued with so expensive a tutelage, he sought for protectors less exacting — The Empress had treated him like a rebel. Prudence had suggested to him an escape; he took refuge at Berlin; secured part of his treasure there,

there, and meditated a plan of abdication.

At the first indication of such a design, which was in favour of one of the Princes of Virtemberg, engaged in the service of Prussia, as it was imagined, the Empress addressed a strong admonition to the States of Courland, and threatened them with her indignation, if they presumed to concur in this opinion. Thus, after having despoiled the reigning Duke of his authority, she insisted he should keep the shadow of it—she forbade Courland to use her sovereign right of choosing a successor to the Duchy. Thus Russia declared to all Europe, that

that she had no respect, no regard, due by sovereigns to their mutual independence ; that for her sake, all those rights should be effaced which are the basis of society ; that she laid an undeniable claim to the dictatorship over such estates as were by Providence in her neighbourhood.

Courland, insensible from fear or corruption, had suffered this outrage—the Duke returned to Mittau—the crisis was favourable to men, roused by a just sense of public injury—the court of Berlin still perceives the effect of Russian influence in Courland, which extends to the frontiers of Poland. The true interest of this country

country would have aided her designs, if she had power to aid her with success.



CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Affairs of Poland—Nomination of Stanislaus the Third by Russia.

THE Empress had hardly dethroned one sovereign, before she undertook to create another in Poland. At the death of Augustus the Third, probably the court of Petersburg did not comprehend all the schemes at first view, which were necessary to carry this plan into execution, but

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which

which were produced and disclosed by degrees. The policy proceeded no farther than to reduce Sweden to inactivity, and thereby to exercise a decisive influence, to form and to excite factions one against the other, and to facilitate that work of Count Panin, the northern league, which might certainly have insured to Russia a supremacy over all the adjoining countries.

The concurrence of Prussia was necessary for the completion of this plan; it was the interest of that king to detach Russia from Vienna—he was adverse to the House of Saxony, and to their pretensions to Poland. Since the peace, he had skilfully engaged

gaged the Empress and Count Panin in his interests, and had negotiated a treaty at Petersburg. Catherine, determined to have the ascendant in Poland, formed an alliance with Prussia, to counterbalance the Saxon, Austrian, and French opposition. In January, 1764, the two courts signed a defensive alliance. Frederick himself informs us that they engaged to prevent the Crown becoming hereditary in Poland; to name a Pfalz or Protector, namely, Stanislaus Poniatowski, Stolnick or governor of Lithuania, to protect the Dissidents, or in juster terms, to arm them against the Commonwealth.

This

The court of Petersburg was the party principally interested in this plan, to whom the advantage would belong—Prussia had only a collateral interest, namely, that of favouring the design of her ally.

The force and energy of the best historians cannot describe the execution, and the horrible consequences of this enterprize: they are the disgrace of this century—the most unprincipled politician could hardly premeditate a system of violence and oppression similar to that under which Poland has groaned for ten successive years.

Waving

Waving the criminations of partizans, events of public notoriety afford the most ample testimony.

To exclude all foreign candidates from an elective sovereignty, was a glaring violation of the constitution of an independant country, which could alone claim the disposition of its crown; but the sole fiat of Russia superseded every other consideration; and a foreign Prince, who might have force or ability to defend the republic, could not be convenient for the designs of Russia.

A sovereign who should be her nominee, and not the choice of his countrymen, was necessary—A Radical

zivil, a Potocki—any noble possessed of reputation, of independance, would not have become a royal pageant, dependant upon a foreign Prince.

The King which she wanted, was one of a mild and flexible character ; insulated, unconnected, without any relation or alliance with any other power in Europe—the legality of whose election should render him obnoxious to the people, to a host of enemies, and consequently forced to rely upon that power and protection to which he had owed his elevation.

All these qualifications appeared in the character of Stanislaus the Third
—a good

—a good disposition, improved by education, those amiable qualities which ingratiate individuals, and gain general regard and esteem. His poverty, his youth, his connections with Russia, the marked favour of the Empress, would have prevented his succession to this painful pre-eminence. This election could never be due to free suffrages; but to a violation of national privileges. This prince, it is presumed, hoped to regain public affection by time; but Russian policy created a lasting alienation.

Upon the convention of the Diet, ten thousand Russians entered Warsaw, while the Prussians menaced the
frontiers

frontiers of the Republic. The districts which chose members, were filled by soldiers, who compelled the nomination of Russian partizans—the capital was soon surrounded by Cossacks, who invested the Diet—their chamber was attacked—one of their members was arrested, and attacked, sword in hand, in this sanctuary of sovereign power, in the presence of the President or Marechale of the Diet, who left the assembly with the emblem of his office, accompanied by many illustrious senators, and other patriotic members, protesting against these violations of the laws of nations, and the liberty of Poland. Retiring into the provinces, they were followed by the Russians, who

who seized some who resisted, proscribed others, and declared Prince Radzivil an enemy to his country—these despotic proceedings were followed by breaches and innovations in the constitution. The four regiments of guards, under the King's authority, united with the Russian troops to interrupt the freedom of election—this tumultuous assembly, influenced by fear, elected and crowned Stanislaus. Exile or submission was the lot of his opponents, while Russia meditated new outrages.

It cannot be denied, that in many antecedent interregnums, recommendations, power, the violence of party, had favoured one or the other of the candidates

candidates ; but a military force, and foreign troops, had never, before this, created a king in a free country, in the midst of his equals—of the lawful electors—of a nation thus influenced in her choice ; nor could Voltaire, or other flatterers, justify this proceeding by precedent.—all former elections had been as peaceable as could be supposed, where numerous, independent, and sanguine partizans were convened—transitory tumults are not civil wars. Thus Henry of Valois, Ladislas the Fourth, Casimir, and Sobieski, had been elected. In divisions, or in double returns, or contested elections, as in the cases of Stephen Battori, Sigismond the Third, the Emperor Maximilian, a Polonese party

party had given the law—public liberty was not undermined, and troops never entered the district of election : no competitor had forced a nomination by his armies, though they might have afterwards supported his election. Charles the Twelfth had, it is true, dethroned a King of Poland by war ; but Augustus had provoked the indignation of the Alexander of the North. The active partizan of the Czar lost his crown by the fortune of that war, in which his imprudence had engaged the republic.

Russia was the first to give the example of a forced, and of a warlike military election : she did not confine herself to countenance a free choice,
but

but she influenced the preliminary steps, and prefaced her proceedings by forcing those places, which chose members, to return her partizans—these preparatory scenes were viewed in their true light by many foreign ministers, representatives of ancient allies, who retired from a country they could no longer consider as free under a military protectorate.

Sectaries and Dissenters, a numerous body, were excluded, under the Saxon Kings, from places of trust and employments in the state; but the tolerating spirit of the republic, the mildest perhaps in Europe, gave them more freedom than in any other country; even in those where philosophy
is

is most predominant. When Russia had excited their discontent, they had two hundred churches, beside places of private worship ; they possessed governments, regiments, and military rank ; most of the subalterns were non-conformists ; their toleration was greater than that of the Dissenters in England, in Holland, in France, and even Russia herself. Political dignities, it is true, were reserved to the established religion ; but every other description of civil liberty was theirs—the republic was ever ready to redress their particular and accidental grievances.

Of grievances, of which few had complained, Russia formed the materials

terials of discontent. The Staroste, and the General Grabouski, two brothers, who were Dissenters, were bribed, and prevailed upon to display their grievances: they claimed the rights of the treaties of Velau and Olivia, where Russia was not concerned as a contracting, or an acceding, party; but she arrogated the right of a guarantee; while Sweden, to whom this right really belonged, was silent. The treaty of Moscow was safely quoted, no stipulations having been created thereby in favour of the Dissenters. At last the Diet, in 1766, heard their complaints, and redressed them, and restored such rights as justice, law, and reasonable toleration, allowed; but rejected such

such as the common order established in all countries had forbidden ; the legal barriers were left between the established religion and the tolerated sects, and excluded the sectaries from all political dignities.

Few states are governed by other regulations ; of all other Princes, the Empress was the least qualified to demand their repeal : in her states, Dissenters never entered into her councils, or administration, or had ever mounted the throne. Had the third Peter effected such an innovation, the apologists of the Empress, the writers of her manifestos, would have proclaimed the danger of the church, and of orthodoxy, as they did

did that of the pecuniary interests of the Monks.—This philosophical toleration, for which they inflamed Poland, did not prevent the schismatic Greeks, under Russian influence, to massacre a hundred thousand men, of a different persuasion, for which no Russian officer was questioned. Many Greeks and Latins, who were pillaged of their all, were seen in the Polish provinces, without the least effort of Russia to redress their grievances.

These remarks would hardly have taken place, had it not been for the number of violences in Poland, under the colour of toleration; but the plan was formed to oppress the republic, to protect a faction, and to maintain

tain a standing Russian army. The policy of the court extended its baneful influence still farther; the equal rights of the Dissenters once established, a Dissenter might occupy the throne, under the auspices of Russia and of her troops, which could level all difficulties. The Greek religion was interested in the designs against the republic, and their influence, in the eastern and southern provinces secured.

The moderate resolutions of the Diet, in 1766, were considered as acts of rebellion at Petersburg—From that moment the Prince Repnin, the Ambassador at Warsaw, became Viceroy of the republic; the Dissenters

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were

were armed, and invoked public protection, while, united with the Russian troops, they betrayed the country.

But the design of defending them openly, with the undecided declarations of the King of Prussia, were not sufficient for the rapid execution of their designs. The King of Poland murmured at the rigorous tutelage of himself, his family, and his party. To give some energy to the national assemblies, they had abolished the *Liberum Veto* *, and some other wise regulations,

* A curious account of this power, which resembled the tribunitia power in the Roman State, is to be found in Mr. Coxe's Northern Tour.

regulations, which gave umbrage to Russia.

In consequence of this, the Russian dictator, under the modest name of an Ambaffador, opposed artfully to the King, the nominee of the Emprefs, the members who had been exiled for their opposition to his election. Various intrigues fucceeded in 1765; and 1767, conciliations were propofed; and it was with the olive branch in his hand, Prince Repnin prepared a poison for the Commonwealth.

By artful intrigues amongst the most discontented of the citizens, the Russian Ambaffador formed the affoci-

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ation

ation at Radom, where the malecontents assembled in 1767, when the Catholicks and some nobles were gained by promises of satisfying their grievances; and it is an authenticated fact, that he proceeded so far as to assure some of them, that the King should be dethroned.

The Prince Radzivil, who had been exiled as the most active opponent of Russia, became the pillar of this new confederacy; he was named President of the Association; but, under pretence of an escort, he became, in fact, a prisoner of state.

The Confederacy itself, surrounded by Russian troops, experienced the
same

same fate :—at this period, he enjoined the convention of a Diet at Warsaw, for the redress of their grievances; and mixing derision with violence, he procured an embassy to the Empress, to thank her for her maternal care. The Confederates perceived in vain the nets in which they were entangled.

This memorable Diet opened in 1767 ;—the Russian troops had dictated the choice of many of their members ;—the Grand Cup Bearer of the Crown had been imprisoned at Pologna, and the republic appeared like a conquered state. One of the members, who had courage to exclaim against their proceedings, was seized
in

in the street ; the Poles, so formidable hitherto to Russia, were besieged by their soldiery in their own senate house, and the legislators were invited to sanction the orders of a Russian plenipotentiary.

Among these decrees of Prince Repnin, one was, to admit the Schismatic Greeks and Dissenters into political dignities, which would annihilate the independence of Poland, and convert it into a Russian province.

Soltyk, Bishop of Cracovie, a man worthy of ancient Rome, having animated the courage of the Diet, and spoken loudly against these proceedings, was seized in his bed ; while
the

the Bishop of Kiovie, and the Count of Cracovie, Rewuski, and his son, underwent the same fate, and were banished to Siberia. Warsaw was treated like a city taken by assault—thus were all Prince Repnin's decrees past, and thus did he pacify the Republic.

“ So many acts of sovereignty,” says the King of Prussia, “ exercised in the dominions of the Republic, by a foreign power, at length affected the public mind ;” some Poles, whom despair had assembled in the Ukrain, gave the signal ; the confederation of Bar was formed, which daily increased, and opposed the tyranny of Russia. Unhappily this increasing

creasing resistance was but faintly, if at all, supported by any foreign court, which enabled the Russians to complete their work. For some time successes were balanced; but the Confederates being left to themselves, and sickle and unsteady in their plans and operations, were of no other use than to increase the barbarity of the Russian generals. One of them, Colonel Drewitz, ordered his prisoners' hands to be cut off, before they were executed. Monasteries, churches, neither age nor sex, were spared: no asylum was inviolate; the estates and properties of the Confederates, and of many others in Poland were plundered, without distinction of ranks, or the rules of war in civilized countries;

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tries; many prisoners of rank were exiled, and perished for want in the deserts of Siberia.

In the midst of these horrors, the Ottoman Porte had declared she would resist encroachments upon her territory, and assist an old and useful ally, and prevent the torrent which inundated Poland from overflowing her possessions.

C H A P. V.

*The influence of the Russian Court in
Denmark.*

THIS rupture occupied not only Russia, but the courts of Berlin and Vienna. The Empress had condemned the northern courts to inactivity ; in the name of the senate, she governed Sweden ; Denmark was influenced by her Ambassadors.

She

She had reason to fear that the latter would avail herself of this crisis, to form alliances to support her ancient, undecided claim to the Duchy of Sleswick. Frederick the Fifth was still living. The Empress sent her privy counsellor Saldern to the Danish court, whose manners and whose haughtiness were analogous to the character of his country.

He displayed at Copenhagen the same haughtiness which even the King of Prussia had complained of at Berlin. The King of Denmark soon found that a Russian influence prevailed in the choice of his ministers and generals, and he concluded his mission, by the proposition of an amicable
arrange-

arrangement of an exchange for the Duchy of Sleswick.

Frederick the Fifth died before this treaty was concluded : Saldern afterwards appeared as a tutor to the new king ; he prevailed upon him to travel, against the opinion of his ministers, and the wishes of the nation. Saldern, and Philosophoff, his subsequent colleague, became the arbiters and directors of the councils of Denmark ; of the schemes, the political, and even private, affairs of the Danish monarch. Their dictatorship was absolute and uncontrolled, and consequently highly unpopular. In 1767, they prevailed with the king to sign the provisional treaty for the Duchy of Sleswick,

Sleswick, and their power might have been as durable as it was considerable, had it not been suddenly limited by that revolution which put a period to the administration of Rantzaw and Struensee.

Seeing Russia weakened by the Turkish war, obliged to keep thirty thousand men in pay to guard Poland; her finances exhausted, and apprehensive of internal commotions; Struensee attempted to conciliate Denmark with Sweden, the affairs of which latter he would no longer embroil: and to found in the North a political balance against the ambition of Russia; but the destiny of this country got the better. The unfortunate

nate Struensee's schemes perished along with him, and Denmark felt the yoke once more; she joined again the train of Russia, and made a compact which forced her to interfere in all the disputes of that power, that is to say, to defend her whenever her attempts upon the liberty of the North should be resisted. From Poland, from the Porte, the Empress had nothing to dread, but negotiations, or rather intrigues; and no real assistance of a power of the first order, or of the court of Vienna. This last court did not look with an indifferent eye upon the ascendancy of Russia. The rapid progress of her schemes, and of her arms, alarmed the Divan, and with much more reason

reason than the neighbouring powers. The House of Austria felt the danger of seeing near her frontiers a power accustomed to respect no boundaries. The Ottoman Porte being once crushed, Poland subdued, and the Danube possessed by the Russians, this storm must needs envelope Hungary and the bordering provinces. Even the King of Prussia, though an ally to Russia, was apprehensive lest, in process of time, she would attempt to give her laws to himself, as well as to Poland: at this period of common danger, he conciliated the court of Vienna: a fact worthy of the greatest attention, the certainty of which is established by Frederick the Second himself, and from which, in this present juncture,

the

the North, and all Germany, may derive much light. The greatest genius which ever sat upon a throne, and one of the most penetrating statesmen, (Prince Kaunitz) saw the necessity of putting an end to the ambitious schemes of Russia, which, however, she resumed, and had almost accomplished without interruption.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

The Partition of Poland.

THE dismemberment of Poland was the result of this conflict, of interests and negotiations. All the blame must fall upon that power, whose ambition, kindling that of her neighbours, forced them, upon pain of a general war, to subscribe to that injustice, the disgrace of our age—
To subscribe, we say, for not only
the

the pretensions and violences of the Court of Petersburg, did no longer allow proper means for their termination; but the Empress herself was the first who justified this scandalous partition.—In that respect, opinion has long varied; but Frederick the Second has thrown a ray of light upon it, in that immortal work, which may be considered as his last testament, wherein he has deposited a recital of his faults with so much candour, and of his exploits with so much modesty.

“The Empress of Russia,” says this great man, “being irritated that any other troops than her own should

" should give law to Poland *, said
 " to the Prince Henry, that if the
 " Court of Vienna intended to dis-
 " member Poland, other neighbour-
 " ing powers had a right to do the
 " same. Count Solms, the
 " Prussian Envoy, was charged to
 " discover whether there was any
 " solid meaning in these expressions
 " which the Empress had dropped ;
 " or if they had been uttered in a
 " moment of humour and transitory
 " passion. Count Panin was rather
 " averse to that dismemberment, but
 " the Empress entertained the flatter-
 " ing

* The King of Prussia here alludes to the
 sequestration of the county of Zips by some
 Austrian troops.

“ ing idea of extending, without
 “ danger, the limits of her domi-
 “ nions. Her minions and some of
 “ her ministers supported her opini-
 “ ons. This resolution was presented
 “ to the King of Prussia, as an expe-
 “ dient contrived to indemnify him
 “ for the subsidies he had paid to Rus-
 “ sia.”

This Leonine convention met, how-
 ever, with great difficulties from the
 Russians; they would not part either
 with Moldavia or Valachia, which
 they had possessed—the court of
 Vienna never would have assented to
 that usurpation.—The King of Prussia
 risked all the danger, the Empress
 had all the advantages, of this par-
 tition.

tition. The Czarina's ministers wore out the time in subtlety and procrastination, in order to absorb the whole profit of this enterprize : at length the firmness of two of the contracting courts checked her inflexible rapacity, and in February, 1772, the treaty was concluded, in a less iniquitous proportion of joint injustice.

We shall not dwell upon this scandalous period of our history, or the infringement of social rights—the contempt of all remonstrances—the dreadful menaces—the outrages of every kind—by the help of which, the ratification of this usurpation was extorted from the Diet of Poland.—The Russian Ambassador acted the principal

pal part in that scene; he alone conducted the plan. The degree of arrogance in those diplomatic oppressors may be easily conceived, after, by a letter from Mr. Saldern, to Count Oginski, Grand-General of Lithuania, the 21st of June, 1771, the Russian Envoy wrote to this magnat, one of the first personages in Poland, “ The Ambassador repeats to you the
 “ orders of his sovereign, that you
 “ should repair to Warsaw, if ever
 “ you should wish to deserve her protection: should you neglect this
 “ intimation, you will feel the consequence:—I need not have recourse
 “ to threats.”



During

During these unprecedented violences, some Russian Emiffaries, and some hireling gazetteers, complimental apologists, and venal writers, flatterers who were reciprocally flattered, represented the Poles as a troop of fanatics, and a gang of rebels. The Empress's manifestos themselves were replete with such epithets—In one of her letters to Voltaire, she calls those confederates whom her generals had plundered, massacred, or exiled to Siberia, the mutineers of Poland. Voltaire, delighted with these philosophical conquests, invented a new language of adulation ; he styled Catherine the Second, the northern star, and he became the high priest of her temple ; a hundred pensioned authors repeated

repeated this fulsome adulation in Germany, and at Paris.

The republic, whose frontiers were destroyed, her demesnes lost, the citizens slain or proscribed, had no other expectation left, but to see a seal put to the annihilation of her independence. She was compelled to refer the examination of her conqueror's projects to a delegation, where a venal and corrupt man presided, whose peculation had been discovered by the Diet, when she had recovered her liberty. Two distinct acts were carried by the contracting powers; the first, to sanction the dismemberment; the second, to fix the form of her government. Notwithstanding
her

her melancholy situation, and the peremptory orders sent to the Diet, only fifty-five Nuncios, against fifty-four, assented to the partition; nearly one half of the representatives of the equestrian order were absent or removed. As for the plan of a new constitution, it adopted all the defects of the old government of Poland, introduced pernicious novelties, and deprived the legislature of the power of correcting its own laws. By the most destructive of these new institutions, the interpretation of the laws, and almost the whole exercise of the executive power, were united in a permanent council, whose superintendence lasted near two years. This council, thus constituted, constantly
G assembled,

assembled, necessarily predominated over the general council, which met only six weeks in a twelvemonth.

Such an organization of the government necessarily facilitated foreign influence; for it was much easier to corrupt a body which consisted of few members, than such an assembly as the Diet. Russia deemed this species of constitution to be subservient to her designs and interests, and she proposed and supported it with her whole strength; while the republick, for different reasons, gave it a strenuous opposition.

The king himself, supported by a majority of the Diet, rejected these
insidious

insidious decrees, which were artfully called reformatations. A whole year of intrigues, of bribery, and of threats and menaces, was necessary to surmount these difficulties, and to overcome this last resistance.

These measures were revived in the following year, and took place in 1776. When they were proposed to the Diet, in order to complete and ratify this revolution, in the beginning of that year, Stanislaus Potocki, the Nuncio, or representative of Lublin, speaking before this regenerated assembly, which professed an intention to restore Poland to her rank amongst the powers of Europe, thus described that Diet in 1776: "This

“Diet,” said he, “violated the most
 “sacred national rights; every free
 “and independent Pole saw himself
 “expelled from that place, which
 “should have been regarded as the
 “sanctuary of liberty—The senate
 “house was surrounded by soldiers,
 “and access was denied to every vir-
 “tuous, patriotic, and public-spirit-
 “ed member of the Diet.”

The act of the 15th of March, 1775,
 which constituted the permanent
 Council, and all the new laws, (it
 should be remembered) were signed
 by the Russian minister: the Envoys
 of the two other contracting powers
 have never ratified these institutions,
 although their concurrence and signa-
 ture

ture were necessary ; and the republic gave positive instructions to that effect to the delegation which was empowered to treat with them ; but Russia considered this as a mere matter of form, and passed by this neglect and fundamental nullity in their proceedings.

She not only compelled Poland to accede to this treaty, so ruinous to herself, and so advantageous to Russia, but she imposed the yoke of her own perpetual guaranty upon all the new laws, whether they had a reference to police, revenue, or constitutional arrangement, which was proclaimed with drums and trumpets at the gates of Warsaw. This was the last mortal

tal firoke to this expiring commonwealth ;—from henceforward, the name of Poland was erased from the catalogue of nations ; she was no longer, it is true, plundered by her protectors, or invaded by her auxiliaries ; but the Russian Ambassador became the Viceroy of Poland, his creatures were the exclusive members of the Permanent Council, his troops garrisoned her fortresses, and a series of servile Diets introduced that lethargy which generally accompanies the loss of liberty.

Europe, from this period, considered Poland as a vassal of the Empress, until the day of retribution arrived ;—a secret discontent announced

nounced its approach—the disposition of the country, and the Turkish war, accelerated her emancipation. The Republic saw with indignation, her southern provinces swarming with Russian troops, burthened by their magazines, infested by their foraging and recruiting parties, treated as tributaries, and subjected to all the horrors of the war between Russia and Turkey. When the Diet was assembled, a powerful sovereign * addressed a celebrated memorial to them, which gave light and information to their councils, and stimulated the energy of their proceedings.

* Frederick William, the present King of Prussia.

ings. The result of his generous efforts and laudable exertions will form a brilliant page in the annals of the eighteenth century.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*Turkish Wars—Oriental System of
Russia.*

THE events which we have related, are only the first links of that chain with which Russia had designed to bind Europe ; but her system extended farther. The fidelity of the Ottoman Porte to fulfil her engagements with Poland, broached designs which were meditated in the time of Peter the Great ; designs conformable to the character of the Empress.

Her

Her troops, in pursuit of the Polish confederates at Bar, did not pay more respect to the Ottoman, than to the territories of Poland; they pillaged the city of Balta, in Moldavia. Upon demands of reparation, the Russians replied by a repetition of the same outrages in various parts of the Turkish dominions, which were the asylum of the Poles. This was a violation of treaties, and of the laws of nations; the treaty of Pruth forbid that military tyranny which they exercised in Poland; as soon as the vigilant and enlightened policy of the Duke de Choiseul had decided the opinion of the Porte, or, as they themselves had been roused by the infractions of the treaties of Carlowitz,

witz, of Pruth, and of Constantino-
ple, her declaration of war was con-
fined to the necessity of guarding her
frontiers. Having guarranteed the
republic of Poland in the entire pos-
session of her dominions, she was in-
terested to prevent her dismember-
ment. Would to Heaven that other
European courts had the same respect
for, and the same firmness and cou-
rage to maintain their engagements.

Fortune, however, seconded injus-
tice; the boldness and brutal, but
firm, courage of her soldiers, gave
advantages to the Russians, in spite
of the inexperience and awkwardness
of her officers. The valour of the
Turks became ineffectual, by the con-
tinual

tinual change of their commanders, by the whimsical projects of some of their officers, which counteracted general systems; and the want of subordination, worse even than cowardice in an army; by that corruption of the enemy which pervaded the Divan, and by that pusillanimity which was the associate of Mustapha the Third upon the Turkish throne.

After several defeats, the Porte signed, in 1774, the treaty of Kainardick, a monument of her weakness, an indication of her supineness, and the herald of future misfortunes. This was the base upon which Russia raised the superstructure of future designs; this was the instrument with which,

which, as the clear-sighted foresaw, the Empress would break that sceptre which she had intended to depress: from this period, Europe, alarmed, or exaggerating the declamations of the parasites of the Empress, considered the Ottoman Empire at the eve of destruction.

This opinion was formed by vulgar minds, who have sufficient understanding to connect causes and effects, without any allowances for the changes wrought by chance, and by circumstances in human affairs, to confound necessity with accident, and bring political systems into the compass of conjecture and imagination.

But

But men, whom these idle speculations did not influence, saw Russia in a situation not less exhausted and enfeebled than her enemies : from the confession of Mareschal Munich himself, the last war but one, with Turkey, had cost Russia two hundred and fifty thousand men ;—imagination is amazed at the number of her soldiers which perished in Poland, in Tartary, on the Niester, on the Danube, and in the Archipelago, from 1768 to 1774. Pugatscheff massacred one hundred thousand, the plague destroyed eight hundred thousand men : in 1771, four hundred thousand Calmucks, persecuted by Russia ; emigrated into Asia : these losses were repeated in a desert, which counts only twenty inhabitants for

for a square of three miles; where all the soldiers are pressed; where a soldier is taken from a proportion of thirty-five inhabitants: some thousand Greeks, forced, or enticed from their country, by insidious promises, some foreign colonies, abortive almost in their birth, a collection of vagabonds and adventurers, who found their only refuge in Russia, could not compensate this destructive depopulation:—true it is, that swarms of Cossacks and Calmucks, tribes more barbarous than their names, could hardly be regretted; but to lose and to possess is a contradiction; nor would generations be produced with the facility with which manifestos and tables of population are framed or forged in newspapers;

newspapers ; it is also true, that usurpations in Poland, and conquests in Turkey increase the number of her slaves ; but assuredly Russia cannot supply her losses and her depopulation, by the conquests of her neighbours.

The finances, public credit, the fleet, the magazines, all felt the general loss ; ruinous schemes, paper money, profusely increased, announced the want of resources ; it was evident that the Empress, in the midst of her victories and bombast, had earnestly solicited peace through the mediation of Mr. Murray, the English Resident at Constantinople, and of Mr. De Zegelin, the Prussian Minister.

nister. It was well known that that brilliant expedition to the Archipelago, which astonished Europe, had only produced vast expence, devastation in Greece, a victory due to English experience, to the abilities of Elphinstone, Dugdale, and the Piemontese Count Masin; but no conquests were retained, no advantage, equal to the expence: prodigality of public money was accompanied with private waste, with magnificence, with largesses almost incredible; the empire, thus decorated with dazzling splendour, could scarcely depend upon two-fifths of the revenues of England; and her circulation, her commerce, or her public riches, were far
from

from sustaining these amazing enterprises.

The campaign of 1774, was preceded by sickness and desertion in the exhausted army of Romanzoff, who was saved by the timidity of the Grand Vizir, and his want of knowledge to profit by his advantages. An adventurer, a Cossack, had propagated the spirit of revolt, which had penetrated as far as Moscow, and proved the danger to which a bold man, less cruel, and more sagacious, might reduce an empire in the season of foreign warfare.

From all these observations, penetrating politicians foresaw, that in
the

the intoxication of victory, Russia knew no bounds; but that the excess of her prosperity would produce a limitation.

After the peace of Kainargik, the designs of dismembering the Ottoman empire were disclosed. The Empress, exalted by her favourites, by writers, who excited her enthusiasm to emancipate Greece, and to reign at Constantinople, perceiving the delicacy of her situation, and informed of the revolutions which had dethroned so many of her predecessors, imagined she could elevate her reputation, and build her security upon the foundations of a new empire at the Bosphorus. Allegorical prints, engraved

graved at Petersburg, represented this Princess trampling upon the standard of Mahomet, and repairing the ruins of Greece. Medals were struck with the representation of the Labarum *: —all the arts, and all the talents of Russia, excited this idolatry, and stimulated the design of the destruction of the Ottoman empire in Europe. Partitioning treaties were the offspring of legions of mercenary writers.

By the treaty of Kainargik, the two powers had acknowledged the Crimea to be *free and independent* ; they reciprocally engaged not to enter into
any

* The Standard of Constantine, adopted by the Turks, was thus called.

any intrigues, not any projects, to interrupt the mutual harmony ; but the Court of Petersburg emulated the example of the Roman emperors, who sent generals into Gaul, or into Armenia, to proclaim their manifestos by the sound of the trumpet. Poland exhausted, could not oppose her decrees ; in subtracting or misleading the Tartars from their dependence upon the Porte, they contrived to keep them in their own subordination—they acquired harbours and fortresses on the Euxine—a Khan, devoted to their interests, governed those regions, so famous in the dreams of mythology—arsenals, docks, and fortifications, were erected upon these frontiers, with batteries and citadels.

citadels. This Imperial Coloffus placed one foot on Cherson, and the other in Kamschatka. Sahim Gueray, a docile chieftain, overlooked the nets with which he was encircled—gratitude and interest attached him to the Empress; his election was forced, like that of Poland, with the same views, and the same intentions.

This chief, the avowed partizan of Russia, who had sacrificed the national interests to the ambition of the Czarina, excited general discontent. In 1777, he was deprived of his military command, and thirty thousand indignant Tartars chose a successor. Neither his rights nor his powers, secured under a Russian guaranty, could

could keep him within neutral bounds; his troops advanced to pacify the Crimea, as they had heretofore pacified Poland. This district, declared independent by a treaty, attested in the most solemn manner, was attacked by a Russian army, who restored the Khan who had been dispossessed. His competitor sought an asylum at Constantinople, solicited succours, and offered to the Porte that appendage which she had lost. The example of Russia would have encouraged the Grand Seignior to interfere in this dispute, and to protect a chief freely and legally elected: but the faith of treaties, and the dictates of prudence, restrained the Divan; they refused an audience to the Tartar deputies, and they

they confined themselves to representations. But though the Russians remained masters of the country, and kept their acquisitions, the Porte had the weakness to acquiesce in the re-establishment of a chief protected by the Empress.

These pacific views, this imprudent concession, emboldened Russia; at the same instant she started new difficulties, and proposed a treaty of commerce, the principles of which revealed her intentions. Though this treaty was the disgrace of the empire, and though an insurrection had put Constantinople in danger, the same councils, the same inconsiderate moderation governed Turkey; and in

1779,

1779, she signed an additional convention presented to her as the seal of an eternal reconciliation.

These sacrifices, it was easy to foretel, would produce no more than a momentary truce, and that new disputes would spring from this source. That policy must be condemned which avoids a war by those concessions which assure to adversaries a still greater facility of hostile operations.

The Porte had a new danger to encounter, while the Empress had hopes of a new ally. Whether it was the effect of an inconstancy peculiar to the cabinet of Petersburg, or by the operation of some connections with

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the House of Austria, her treaty with the King of Prussia had expired. The court of Vienna had forgot her old fears and her ancient principles ; eight years before, she would not suffer the Russians to extend their influence in Moldavia, nor allow them to approach her frontiers, nor pass the Danube and give laws to Turkey. The Empress-Queen, and Prince Kaunitz, influenced by these maxims, entered into a negotiation with the Porte* : but the death of Maria-Theresa introduced new systems ; distrust was changed into reciprocal confidence.

* The King of Prussia's Memoirs relate the alarm created in the court of Vienna, by the ambition of Russia at this time.

confidence. Before this period, the peace of Teschen had been concluded under the mediation of Catherine the Second. A mysterious interview between that Princess and the Emperor had taken place, which had united interests so apparently discordant. A secret treaty confirmed the fears of Europe, and engaged the general attention touching those projects upon which this formidable association was grounded. Such was the crisis in which the Empress, in 1782, invaded the Crimea.

Sahim Gueray, the mercenary and felonious instrument of the Russian policy, abdicated his dignity : but did he surrender it to his constituents ?

H 2

No ;

No ; he sold it to the Empress : he sold that sovereignty to which he had no claim. This elected chief sold his masters and his electors ; but this cession was ridiculous. If the King of Poland had sold his throne, would the rest of Europe ratify the bargain ? Immediately a Russian army plundered those provinces which were rendered free in 1777, subjected them to her laws, and an apologising manifesto followed the invasion.

When Tamerlane, Attila, and Nadir Shaw, subjected their neighbours, equity was a slight obstacle ; without scruples, and without chicane, they exercised their powers ; nor did shame colour or masque their injustice. In

our

our days we are told, that politeness, humanity, and philosophy, violate treaties, dismember states, spread discord, and legitimate usurpations. Poland abuses her liberty: slavery, it is said, should relieve her from anarchy. Are dissensions excited in Sweden, publick liberty becomes the pretext.—Ignorant countries, like the Crimea, should be polished by force of arms.

In her apologising manifesto, the Empress announced, that she had lost the product of her victories, if Sahim Gueray did not remain under her protection:—that was to say, that she had consecrated the independence of the Tartars, and the freedom of
their

their elections, so long as those franchises were subservient to her interests. By a parity of reason, the Porte could usurp the sovereign authority of this district; thus the independence of the Crimea, unconditionally established in 1774, consisted in receiving the law from either of those powers, whenever one of them should deem it expedient to dispose of her sovereignty. According to this manifesto, it was the love of order and public tranquillity, which, with the Divine assistance, had introduced the Russian arms into the Crimea; which had exercised a tyrannical sway, disposed of the sovereignty, appeased revolts, and given a supremacy over the sovereign himself.

All

All these measures were *dictated* solely by the imperial regard for *humanity*, grounded upon a *conviction*, that Tartars could not appreciate the *value* of *independence*. Lastly, by the right of ancient *conquest*, which had been annihilated by the treaty of 1774, and by the only method of ensuring the blessings of a *lasting* and permanent peace.

By the extension of such arguments, the Czarina had a right to the possession of Turkey. The *ennui* of debates, the care of tranquillity, the security of good neighbourhood, would have given similar possessory claims to Russia in the surrounding provinces. Georgia, Moldavia, as
well

well as the Crimea, would furnish subjects of mutual discord. Step by step, this progressive argument would reach Egypt, and every province connected with, and tributary to, the Porte, which might, from those circumstances, create alarms and inquietudes; so that, from a chain of reasoning, it might be ultimately, and justly, inferred, that nothing but the universal subjection of Turkey could ensure a solid and permanent pacification.

Upon the intelligence of this enterprise, the Porte, suspended between surprise and indignation, prepared a formidable resistance—If a patriotic policy had had its due influence, she
would

would have regarded her safety, her just resentment, and popular, tumults; she would have rigged her squadrons and struck her tents; a powerful influence, prescribed by moderation at least, delayed those enterprizes which true policy enjoined: doubts of disasters were artfully infused, the operations of the Emperor were magnified, the auxiliary of Russia ready to act in concert with a hundred thousand men. These temporising councils prevailed over motives of self-defence; and although Constantinople, taken in forty-nine days, by Mahomet the Second, had remained defenceless since that period, and without any barrier towards the Black Sea, a convention, signed in January

1784, authorised the usurpation of the Crimea and of Couban, but upon articles which were infringed with the same facility with which they had been framed.

Georgia and Cabartas soon afterwards experienced the same fate ; the Prince Heraclius was bribed ; Egypt was inflamed by the intrigues of Russia : every where, particularly in Moldavia and Wallachia, in the Archipelago, her consuls were incendiaries employed to corrupt the vassals of the Porte, and to excite insurrections. Since the treaty of 1774, two of these emissaries had been punished, and the Empress regarded their punishment as an infraction of the laws of nations.

nations. In the midst of peace, some Greeks were taken away by force; if Russian ships entered the Propontis, it was by false representations of the number and tonnage of those vessels; every day gave rise to some vexatious pretensions, and they proceeded to enter into the secret councils of the Divan to interfere in her administration, to influence the choice, and to exact the dismissal of public officers.

The observer of these differences, so difficult to terminate, after multiplied treaties and conventions, must necessarily ask what would be the issue of this war of increasing grievances and conventions, each of which has
generated

generated new encroachments and new troubles? The demands of Russia increased in proportion to the condescension or hesitation of the Divan. The opinions of Europe were divided upon the consequences of this crisis, when she saw the second Catherine realize the fable of Sesostris, departing with inconvenient pomp from the frozen plains of Ingria, to display her powers on the embouchures of the rivers on the Black Sea, to penetrate into new conquests desolated since their submission, with a dazzling and imposing procession ; and received on the banks of the Nieper by a King of Poland, in the Tauride by the Emperor of Germany, and marching with a convoy of forty thousand
men

men, to take possession of a Mussulman country, under the eyes of the successor of the Khaliphs. While this Princess displayed an Oriental magnificence before a people, whom, in her last manifesto, she had called an asylum of freebooters—while the Greek description of the road to Bizantium appeared upon the gate-way at Cherson ; she disquieted the Turks by new diplomatic hostilities.

This pageant, this ostentation, at length roused the lion from his slumber. The Empress was scarcely returned to Petersburg, before her envoy was imprisoned in the seven towers, the Black Sea was covered with ships, the Turkish troops were marching

ing through a territory, which had recently re-echoed her triumphal acclamations.

Political events, and the silent revolutions which were secretly operating in many parts of Europe, seemed to favour a resolution, which was just and decisive. Most cabinets were tired of the Russian haughtiness, or disturbed by her projects; and her intimacy with Austria could not lessen this anxiety. Penetration could not reject the surmise, that a secret jealousy subsisted between the two courts, and that the Emperor, an enlightened prince, having the choice of vicinity, would prefer the exhausted Turks in his alliances, to the Russians, whose
preponderance

preponderance was every where converted into a sovereign influence. Since the peace of Belgrade, the good intelligence between Vienna and the Porte, was not interrupted. The Turks respected the misfortunes of Maria Theresa; nor did they profit by the embarrassments of 1740, nor those of the seven-years war.—Some light clouds were seen to interrupt this harmony:—the Divan had dispersed them with moderation: the Bosnian limits were amicably arranged, and the districts of Buckovine were ceded by Turkey with unexpected facility.

From these circumstances, it was supposed that the court of Vienna
would

would act, at least, the part of a simple auxiliary, if she did not represent the character of a dignified neutrality.

Though the principal, and oldest, ally of Turkey was occupied by internal troubles, indecisive in her political system, and could only relieve her by negotiations, many other states offered secret services. The Empress had cooled the attachment of England by a conduct, which in London was called ingratitude. Detached from Prussia, she had promised her guarantee for the Bavarian exchange; and Berlin considered the court of Petersburg as the Emperor's associate. Poland, meditating revenge, considered

dered the Turks as their guardians ;
and lastly, Sweden had equal interests to defend, to render her guarantee, so often flighted, respectable, and to resume, after twenty years interval, her equilibrium in the North.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

Constitution—Russian Influence in Sweden—Affairs of Finland.

THIS state was the most aggrieved by Russia ; the power which deprived her of so many provinces in the beginning, governed her by a corrupt and despotic influence in the sequel of this century. The conduct of Charles the Twelfth, the pride, and the misfortune of Sweden, had produced

duced a revolution in the government, in which the past only was considered, without any regard to future evils, experience of evils often affects nations too much to allow them to weigh and to examine their remedial provisions, the inconveniences of which are often long concealed, till futurity discovers their fatal consequences.

The impetuous discontent of Sweden, or of some demagogues, destroyed the balance of the component parts of her constitution.

In the recesses of her diets, the power lodged in the senate controlled the royal authority; the nomination
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and qualification of senators were given, with the whole legislative power, to the states. The executive power was subjected to a body, each member of which might be dismissed by the states; and the judicial power was vested in their committees. During their sessions, the complete executive power was vested in a secret commission of the states, without limit or balance, in a body of seven, perhaps eight, hundred men. The royal authority was confined to mere representation; the King could not dismiss an impertinent servant; and, in Mr. Sheridan's words, " he appeared
 " only as a state pageant, decorated
 " for

“ for holidays and courtly festi-
“ valst.”

This constitution favoured all the defects, all the disorders of internal policy, and all the schemes of foreign adversaries ; and consequently, by
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† Mr. Sheridan (the son of the late Manager of the Dublin theatre, who has exemplified his theory in the education of his children, and to whose valuable labours the translator is happy to advert) was secretary to Sir John Goodrick, when the revolution, which he has recorded, took place in 1774. He was afterwards Secretary at War in Ireland, but he was dismissed in 1789, after the great question of the Regency was decided, with a pension of 800l. The appointment of his successor was so oddly contrived, as to lose, instead of acquiring, parliamentary influence in Ireland.

the treaty of Newstadt, in 1721, the Czar became its gaurantee.

Experience is the surest test of government: principles may be condemned when attended with pernicious effects. What was the portrait of Sweden in 1772? General weakness, shameful neglect in all her departments; an inconsiderate war in 1757, unskilfully, dishonourably conducted; the love of glory subdued by the spirit of intrigue, and the welfare of the state by a criminal selfishness: places conferred, and powers torn from their monarch by a faction; all was venal; each suffrage, and each majority, the objects of mercantile calculation. “Corruption
“tion

“ tion was so transcendant,” says Frederick the Great, “ that at one
“ time a French, and at another a
“ Russian, faction prevailed, while
“ the national party never predomi-
“ nated.”

Russia played the principal part in this scene of confusion ; meditating the arbitration of the Swedish government, no opportunity was lost to profit by the general anarchy ; and her fancy decided, in 1750, the contested bounds of Finland.

Russia, allied with France and Austria, from the dislike of Elizabeth to the King of Prussia, produced that demolition in 1756 of the feeble rem-
nant

nant of royal authority, as the first fruits of that combination, accompanied with mortifying insults to the King and Queen : and lastly, that war in 1756, where Sweden followed as a vassal in procession, without interest, reason, or justice, and saw her brave legions sacrificed to the frivolity of her government.

Intrigues and bribes at Stöckholm were doubled since the accession of the second Catherine : the predominance of the party of the Bonnets was secured ; she dictated all their resolutions ; and while she laboured to introduce anarchy into Poland, she confirmed and ratified it in Sweden. Nothing remained except the dethronement of
the

the King; when the intrepidity of Gustavus the Third prevented this last attempt, restored the empire of the laws, circumscribed that liberty which consisted only in the sale of public welfare, and banished for ever that despotism of corruption under which she had so long been afflicted.

The Empress had engaged the King of Prussia in a convention, to guaranty the Swedish government as established by the treaty of Newstadt in 1721. From thence we may estimate her surprise at this revolution.—“ Anger
 “ and vengeance,” says Frederick the Second, “ would have had an immediate operation, had not the
 “ Turks firmly resisted the hard
 I “ and

“ and imperious terms of peace which
 “ she had proposed. The King
 “ of Sweden, aware of the danger by
 “ which he was menaced, laboured a
 “ conciliation with Denmark, that he
 “ might be engaged with a single ad-
 “ versary.”

Here we have the most revered,
 and most decisive evidence of the de-
 signs of the Empress against Sweden :
 after this, it is no less true than it is
 astonishing, that in a reply, con-
 tained in a libel, avowed by the cabi-
 net of Petersburg, entitled, “ *Obser-*
 “ *vations and Historical Ecclaircisse-*
 “ *ments,*” studiously circulated in Fin-
 land, effrontery could misrepresent
 these precautions of Gustavus, against
 the

the joint animosity of Denmark and Russia, under the idea of a voluntary and fanciful aggression, which the least menace from Russia would have prevented.

Affuredly Russia was not then in a formidable state—Had the King of Sweden profited by her losses, the absence, sickness, and misery of her troops, the terror and indications of revolt, upon the near approach of Pugatscheff, he had nothing to fear; save only an abusive and sophistical manifesto from the Russian ministers.

This Prince was governed by other maxims: he saved the Empress from

new dangers; and public notoriety will prove a chain of solicitude, to maintain harmony and good understanding between the two courts.

Notwithstanding this determination, the Russian intrigues increased, the slightest pretexts for discontent were magnified in Sweden by misrepresentation; emissaries were found in her provinces, to inflame the people by false insinuations.

Since the peace of Abo, Russia had secretly laboured to detach Finland from Sweden: beside this enterprize dictated by her ruling principle of usurpation, the vast projects of the Czarina induced her to prevent the efforts

efforts of Sweden to assist her ally, and to attack Russia in a vulnerable place. At one time, she fomented the spirit of revolt, at another, she promised the Finlanders independency. The Baron Sprengporten, loaded with the favours of the King of Sweden, and invested with great employments in Finland, with every mark of confidence and bounty, was gained by the offers of the Empress, and had no scruples to betray his king, his country, and the most sacred obligations.

A Russian officer, under the pretext of curiosity, had, in 1786, visited the posts of Finland, reconnoitred those which might be attacked, and endeavoured to sound and to corrupt

rupt the principles of the inhabitants.

This clandestine war engaged the unceasing vigilance of the Swedish King: of the secret designs of Russia he could not doubt; but the moment of open resistance was not come; and danger was concealed, lest the kingdom should be involved in a premature rupture.

At length the Porte was roused from its lethargy.—To indicate the aggressor would be idle:—assuredly, tired with the hostilities of ten years, she was not obliged to attend the visit of the Russians at the gates of Constantinople.—Their treaty with
Sweden,

Sweden, in 1759, enabled them to solicit succours.—The interest and engagements of Gustavus concurred with their desire.

Russia immediately resolved to cripple Sweden, by those measures which had ruined Poland, enslaved the Crimea, and subjected Courland. The embers of the flame in 1772 were revived—the Count Rosamoufski resumed the part of his predecessors as minister of the Empress—every engine was employed to excite a faction against the King—the Russian Envoy's conduct was most indiscreet—public seduction was evident in his words and actions—in the capital, and under the King's eyes, no Ambassador

bassador ever braved so audaciously the respect due to sovereigns, the rights of hospitality, and the duties of his function. The Count Rosamou-
ski had forgot discretion; his declarations were outrages, appeals to the people against their sovereign:—bold and insidious, these hostile notes infused rancor and gall into the hearts of too many.—The government did not forget in this conjuncture what was due to public tranquillity and the laws of nations.—The king declined to acknowledge his powers as a minister, and compelled him to abandon the theatre of his intrigues.

The Empress not only justified, but complained of the dismissal of her minister :

minister :—Europe was shocked at the conduct of the court of Petersburg, which treated self-defence as a proof of hostility.—Neither respect for kings, nor prudence, nor conciliation, formed any part of her conduct ; even peace was announced with insulting language.

When victory had abandoned her arms, artifice succeeded ; her agents tampered with the officers of the Finland troops—the most despotic court in the universe refounded the word liberty in the ears of the Swedish subjects : some of whom forgot their allegiance to their King and country, deserted them in the hour of danger, and entered into a traiterous correspondence.—A

terrible example, an awful lesson, for those states whose destiny placed their interests in opposition to the designs of Russia.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Negotiations of England and Prussia with the Czarina—Interests of the Maritime Powers—The Importance of the Establishment of Russia, as a Naval Power, in the Mediteranean.

THE inflexible pride of that court prevailed at the moment of the bursting of a storm ; when Poland was ready to break her chains, and Prussia to second her laudable designs ; when the cabinets of Potsdam and of London

don engaged in the same interest : all meditation was scornfully rejected ; she received the offer of the Swedish King, to reconcile her to the Porte, with disdain ; which compelled him to the necessity of defensive measures, and the completion of his engagements with Turkey.

The mediation of England was equally rejected without regard to their alliance, to past service, or the slight ties by which they were allied. The English pride and liberality were shocked with stratagems, with disdain, with hostile intimations, from a court which owed her eternal obligations. The expedition to the Archipelago was solely to be ascribed to
English

English aid and assistance, and to them the glory of it should be ascribed: the disabled fleet of the Empress harboured, repaired, and victualled by England, could never have cleared the Channel without the skill of British pilots; nor would they have burned the Turkish fleet, had it not been for the ability of the first of the maritime powers. If England enabled the Russian flag to appear without dishonour before the Dardanelles, and zealously befriended her negotiations, what was her acknowledgement? A desertion when England was almost overpowered by her enemies, that armed neutrality which deprived them of those mariners they procured from the Baltic, which enabled

bled Holland to carry on an illicit trade, which speciously gave the title of the protectress of marine freedom to the Empress, but which, in reality, was a mortal wound to the importance of England.

The English capitals and traders are the great resource of the Russian commerce, the vital principles of her tardy circulation; though the balance of trade is a loss of near one million annually to England, though English ships constitute the half of the vessels which arrive annually at Cronstadt, the Empress has procrastinated the renewal of their commercial treaty:—cluding the solicitations of the English cabinet, promising much and terminating

minating nothing, the negotiation has languished, and the effects of their projected arrangements are as humiliating as they are ridiculous.

The new allies of England invited the Empress to reflect upon the proposed joint arbitration of Great Britain and Prussia. The successor of Frederick the Great, ambitious more of the title of a peace maker than of a conqueror, held the balance with a firm and impartial hand, and proposed an amicable adjustment.—His reign daily acquired, without the eclat of war, that reputation, which wise and able measures, the wisdom of councils, the moderation and just management of power, never fail to bestow.

bestow. The King of Prussia had discovered a mine of mischief formed in Poland, by Russian emissaries, equally dangerous to Prussia, as well as to Turkey.—An exclusive alliance, was rejected between that republic and Russia; by the energy of his declarations, and the conviction of his resolution, the court of Berlin warded off this stroke, and gave new life to Poland. Whether the Russian ministers were blinded by the facility and possibility of a great event, or whether Catherine, intoxicated by success, consulted more her favourites than her interest, she rejected, with disdain, the idea of mediation; she braved all risques, and the moderation

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ration of the King of Prussia solely prevented a formidable alliance of five powers against Russia.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

Conclusion—General Remarks—Summary of this Work.*

SUCH are the historical features of the present time, of which all Europe is a witness. Her Kings have viewed perhaps with too much prudence,

* This conclusive chapter is, perhaps, the most valuable part of this work. A short and comprehensive account of the political interests of the

dence, the progress of this enterprising policy, by which the laws of nations have been annulled, the
faith

the different states in Europe is much wanted : and it is very extraordinary, that, at the present crisis, an able pamphlet has not appeared upon Continental affairs, nor upon the part which this country might act as the arbiter of Europe.

According to what, I believe, may be considered as the most authentic compilation of parliamentary debates, before they were regularly published in newspapers, in 1773-4, I mean the debates in the Lilliputian club, where the names of the principal speakers are travestied in the Gentleman's Magazine ; the principal debates in the days of Sir Robert Walpole turned upon foreign treaties and Continental interests.

This

faith of treaties has disappeared, and the abuse of power has legitimated usurpation. This vast empire, which,
for

This Chapter resembles that short, but excellent, abridgement of the state of Europe, by Sir William Temple, in 1673, presented to the Duke of Ormond by that great man at the end of his second embassy, in answer to his short question, "What was necessary to be done?"—or what part this country should take at that crisis.

It were much to be desired that some able man, in the diplomatic line, would favour the public with some chart of the present schemes, alliances, connections, and interests, of the Continent—I say the public, because, notwithstanding some new doctrines, publicity is the vital principle of a free country; information and intelligence can alone animate their exertions, and direct their energy. It is very easy to talk of
committing

for twenty years, has spread terror, corruption, despotism, and war, embraces all varieties of climate, and comprehends

committing lives and fortunes ; but mankind must be persuaded that they are in the right, before they can be prevailed upon to engage with zeal and patriotism in foreign wars : blindfolded exertions are childish and contemptible.

For such a character as Sir William Temple, we shall look in vain, while our embassies are bestowed merely from parliamentary interest, or rendered commodious for men who cannot live conveniently at home. This great man was patronized by the Duke of Ormond, in consequence of his exertions in the Irish parliament after the restoration, where, as representative of the county of Carlow, he appeared as the first speaker, and the ablest member, of that assembly. Some time ago I was much disappointed in my application

comprehends every species of resource. Seas inaccessible to European fleets ; deserts or enslaved countries are her frontiers : hitherto, impressions upon
her

application to the nobleman who inherits his name and virtues, for some early memorials of Sir William Temple, as this part of his life has not been dwelt upon by any of his biographers ; and these anecdotes to which I allude, were collected, with some materials, for a parliamentary history of Ireland to the revolution, in which I have been for some time engaged. This work I intend to form upon Mr. Hatfield's plan, and to render it entertaining by some memoirs of the Duke of Ormond, from papers communicated to me by a particular friend, the heir of that illustrious nobleman, to whom I have the honour of being nearly allied : and I shall leave it to my country, if I may hope that a sufficient period is allotted to me to accomplish so laborious an undertaking.

her territory have been hastily deemed impracticable. While her adversaries remain upon the defensive, swarms of undisciplined savages emigrate from their habitations, and destroy extensive countries in a campaign. Prussia and Poland still bleed from those ravages, when troops which are mowed down without being subdued, are animated by pillage, by fanaticism, or by the ambition of their sovereign, who in losing soldiers, only loses slaves;—woe to those states which border upon this destructive power!

Peace must be purchased by sacrifices, or secured by a preparation commensurate to the danger. Russia menaces at the same time, Turkey,
the

the North, and Germany : the reduction of one, would accelerate the conquest of the others. Solitary resistance is vain, against an empire which can produce soldiers, like grains of sand, whose policy has no other principles than those of interest, and whose bold maxims correspond with that fortune, which has so long favoured their projects.

By the schemes she has executed in Poland, that republic, and Courland, are warned of the danger which threatens them, if they should not seriously advert to timely provisions for their safety.

Before*

Before the Russian was united with the Austrian army, Frederick the Great was surprised at the rapidity of their progress; he had seen them penetrate into the heart of his states, and lay Prussia under contribution, a country always exposed to invasion, while Poland and Courland are under Russian influence. Russia, as the auxiliary of the chief of the German empire, and associated in his projects, can attack Prussia on the south as well as the north, aid the Emperor by her diversions, and menace the liberty of Germany.

Sweden maintains her situation, thanks to the firmness and precaution of her king; but recent events

K

reveal

reveal the secret of that slender thread upon which her tranquillity depends, and demonstrates the necessity of a balance which may place the Empress in due bounds of limitation.

A similar interest should affect the politics of Denmark, if the memory of their absurd rivalry with Sweden and the prejudices of her ministers, should no longer fascinate that country. Can she not perceive that her alliance is an instrument which she lends to Russia to disquiet her neighbours, and to tyrannize over the North? Is it not clear, that in lending her influence to weaken, or to crush the powers on the Baltic, she will ultimately contribute to her own depression?

depression? What would be her security, if the neighbouring powers should be disabled, or subdued by Russia? Every thing conspires to induce Denmark to a mutual defensive alliance, to maintain the equilibrium, to counterbalance the preponderance of Russia, to imitate that noble system, the Germanic league, the rampart of weak states against the power of a great empire.

The maritime and commercial states, the South, Italy, and Venice, in particular, are affected by the same apprehensions. ~~They should~~ participate in the establish her power in the Mediterranean, human foresight cannot appreciate

ciate or comprehend the wide and vast effects of such a revolution.

To all these, I shall subjoin the supereminent consideration of the happiness of Russia herself, of her true glory, of her national interests, sacrificed to the eclat of a transitory reign, whose trophies are stained with blood. That nation, which has surprised Europe with the rapidity of her civilization, should endeavour to consummate that great work; to which peace is essential. The natural aptitude of that robust, flexible, and penetrating people, to repair the ravages of successive wars ~~and to facilitate this~~ design. They yet want arts, manufactures, internal and foreign commerce,

merce, capitals, population ; and her civilization does not extend beyond Moscow. This cannot be the work of a sovereign, engrossed with ideas of territorial aggrandizement ; nor of favourites trembling at her nod, at their future destiny, and providing asylums in the neighbouring states as refugees from despotism. This great donation is reserved to the nobility, to the nation itself, formed to give examples of virtue, which decorate humanity. It is alone by exerting her activity in the centre of the state, that her wounds can be healed, and that she can support the inconvenient and gigantic extent of her empire.

The

The Russians still proudly remember that Prince who, unintentionally perhaps, prepared them for freedom, while they were civilized as slaves. Of all the plans and schemes of that great man, the most admirable, though the least noticed, was that of abandoning two thirds of that empire to bears and to nature, to concentrate the whole population in the provinces which are within a practicable distance of the capital, and to strengthen his country by consolidation. This policy is a satire upon the present reign; a policy assuredly adopted by the intelligent part of the community; they have too much good sense not to lament, that all her powers have been turned against her genius
and

and disposition, against her interest, and to see the destruction of her resources, without the acquisition of any solid advantage. Of what moment are vain and pompous conquests, which exist only in sounds, in hymns, in Te Deums, and in festivals? *

May

* This sentence has been extended by the translator—no other liberty has been taken in this English version, save only that of dividing it into Chapters, and adding a few notes. This Work has been authenticated to me, as the work of the King of Sweden, though it cannot be supposed that it was compiled without assistance, as the Posthumous Works of Frederick the Great were revised by the Prussian Minister, Count Hertzberg. No pains have been spared to make the translation and the printing as accurate as possible.

It

May the successor to this throne, that Prince, whom Europe has observed in his travels, accompanied with such modesty, an example of private virtues, and whose benign inclinations may heal the wounds of those fruitless wars. May the Grand Duke be no longer guided by this absurd, and romantic policy. May he substitute in the place of fallacious grandeur, that true greatness which
 results

It is to be hoped the Public will accept of apologies for any mistake in a work undertaken in a period of indisposition, and of political turbulence ; which could not (the Public must suppose) be accompanied with pleasant reflections, nor be altogether favourable to the literary pursuits of the translator.

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results from the moderation of princes, and from the prosperity of their people.

FINIS.



